

Assessment of Dual Language Learners

Interpreter: Good morning to our local audience and our participants who are online. We would like to warmly welcome you to this session on assessment of dual language learners. I would like to make some recommendations before we begin. First of all, I'd like to thank the Head Start office and the National Center for Development Learning of Early Childhood and thank them for giving us this opportunity to meet today and to record the presentation. Later on, it'll appear in the ECLKC website for you to look at. This is a live session. Therefore, we'd like to ask you to please turn all cellphones off right now. I'll give you a few minutes to do so -- a few seconds to do so. Another recommendation is that you please make sure there's no noise in the room.

If you need to ask questions, please come to the mic that is at center of the room. And if possible, do not leave the room until the session has concluded. Are we ready? I now have the honor of introducing Sandra Barrueco, Dr. Barrueco. Some of you know her personally. She's the author of the book entitled "Assessing Young Dual language learners," and she's going share with us her expertise. And we are very grateful to her for being with us today, this morning. And please feel free to ask her questions. She will also be asking you questions so that you can participate. We'd also like our audience online to ask questions, and we will submit them to Dr. Barrueco. Thank you. I'd like to thank Victoria Prieto, who has worked very hard to make this day come true. And I'm very pleased to be here. Welcome to all of you.

We will begin.

Today, we are focusing on the assessment of young dual language learners. And I'd like to welcome all of you. I'd like to learn a bit from all of you, where you come from, what are your jobs. Do we have a lot of teachers here and directors? So, let me begin by asking you where you come from. Where do you come from? Who do you represent? I'm from Connecticut. I am in a program that -- consults on programs throughout the state. My job is program manager and supervisor. Are there other program managers here? Can you tell me where you come from? I work with social -- networks.

So, you're a home visitor. And you work with young families. Anybody else wish to tell me where they come from? Could you please speak into the mic? Otherwise, the interpreters cannot hear you. My name is Gabriella, and I come from Pensacola, Florida, where I live. And I am an English-language pathologist. And so I do deal with a lot of bilingual children and try to identify the problems with their language. So, I'm the only pathologist right now in my clinic who can do this kind of work.

So I'm very interested in hearing your presentation. And what I'd like to say is that all of us have a great deal of experience in this room. And I see also, I am sure, that those of you who are online, working hard, and could be here with us today have also a great deal of expertise. So, I am now going to talk about studies I have done and the experience I have with young children. But I realize many of you have a lot of experience.

So I'd like to have us all share our wisdom. Let me give you my background. I've worked with young children for more than 20 years. I started out as an assistant teacher with early childcare. And I was in that job for three years, and I loved it. I loved being with young children. But I was very curious. I wanted to continue trying to find out what we know about the development of children. So I went back to school, got a master's, and went on to a doctorate. And I worked for a few years with children directly as a psychologist. I worked in a children's hospital in Colorado and Washington, D.C. I also worked with children at Johns Hopkins hospital. And I wanted to do more research to see if I could support the programs and support you, who deal and work with families every single day and with children every single day.

So, 12 years ago, I joined the Catholic University of America, where I'm the director of a program on clinical psychology. And I'm also head of Latin American Studies at the university. But all my work is focused on young children, early childhood. So, today we are going to have a discussion, the technology used and developmental screening, evaluation of functional assessment, and the technology of children who are English-language learners. We call it DLL, dual language learners. And I'll also talk about the practices recommended to deal with children who are dual language learners. Also, we're going to focus on systems for assessing children who are dual language learners.

So, with these DLL children who understand two languages, there are always a lot of questions that parents and teachers ask me and even question that I ask myself. For instance, how can the children's languages be utilized in assessments? How can we understand the development of children both within and across languages? What are the best ways of doing so? And what mistakes should we avoid? And then the final question is, "Why?" Why do such assessments? 'Cause they're so difficult to do sometimes, for us as well as for the children.

So, I'd like to know what questions you have today and why you came here today to ask questions about DLL assessment. Could you please speak to the mic when you do? I know you have a lot of questions, a lot. Good morning. My name is Brejita Engel. I come from Topeka, Kansas, and I work for the School District 501. I am a teacher of parents as teachers. And one of the things I hear from teachers in my district is that bilingual children, because of the fact they're speaking two languages, are always behind in their domination of the language. I knew this was gonna be one of the first questions asked. That they are behind, yes.

Any other questions? What tools are there available to assess dual language learners? Okay. What tools are there? We're gonna talk about that. And we're gonna focus on how we can choose the best tools because there are some that really don't work, to be honest. They don't work at all. And there's others that are excellent. And finally we've come to a point in time where there are assessments, systems, tools that have been well-crafted. What is your question? First I'd like to ask, how can we help parents when their children speak English and Spanish and are located in a sector where the school may not have all the resources to be able to help the parents? Another question is how to help teachers and those people who are working with the families to make sure they have all the tools -- It would be best to have all of them, but at least have some tools to be able to help their children. I know there are thousands more questions -- well, maybe not a thousands -- a hundred more. But I may not be able to answer all of the questions, but we're going to focus on assessments right now. And I'd like to talk about, what are some questions to be addressed through developmental screening and assessment? And let me give you some examples. For instance, how is this child developing overall within and across multiple domains of development? Another question.

Example -- should we be specifically concerned about the child's language development? And how is the child developing in his English skills over time? Or how about in his mother tongue or in both? Because I think it's very information to obtain information to respond more effectively to the needs of the child, basically. And let me now give you an example. A young boy, very cute, nice little boy, came to me. And his mother came to me, as well. And she was very, very worried about the child's learning of English, his development in English. The child was born here in the U.S. He was in a classroom where they spoke to him a lot in English. He watched TV in English. His little brother spoke to him in English. So, he heard English a lot. But the mother thought that this was causing harm to him or she was causing harm to him because she only spoke to him in Spanish.

But this little kid didn't know any English. He just knew a few words, a few sentences. And the preceding year, the pediatrician -- She was telling them that she was very worried about it. But the doctor and others said to her, "Don't worry because sometimes when a child is bilingual, their development takes place slower. But over time, everything will be fine. A year went by, and the child had not learned one single additional word in English. He so he was isolated, sitting alone in his room. He didn't play with other kids. Whenever she wanted to hug him, he wouldn't let her. So, she asked herself, "What's going wrong with my child's development in English?" And so she came to me for that, and we started to talk and do a full, full assessment. I did some testing on the child, and I found that his Spanish development was also very low.

He couldn't even speak Spanish, just a few words, a few sentences. And we also saw that he wasn't happy to be with other people. He wouldn't look people in the eye. He only liked to play with one single toy and only that toy, and he would play with it for hours. I think most of you by now know what I'm getting at, and what was happening with this child. He had autism. It was very clear, very clear. I've seen a lot of children in my life, just like you. And so it was very clear to me. But we did the assessment, and so we focused on other parts of development. But if we don't do that, sometimes we lose sight of what's going on with the child, if we target only and we focus only on what's going on

with English, which is what a lot of people are doing.

And I realize it's important to pay attention to the English development. But if you only look at that part of the picture -- and that's what happened with the other professionals -- they didn't see what was going on with the social development of the child. And that's why it's so important to perform tests in Spanish, as well, to assess the child in Spanish because the other professionals didn't realize that the child's development in Spanish was very low. which is a classic symptom of autism that a child has very low language development. So, we have to make sure the development of DLL children is not separated from the other domains of development. And there's a lot of technology for this. Today let's talk about the terminology that's available. DLL -- which means dual language learners -- Here we're talking about children who are learning two languages from the moment of birth. So, they're always learning English and another language.

But another expression is DLL children who first started speaking in Spanish because their family spoke Spanish. And then they start to acquire and learn English. So, this group is a mix of different kinds of children. Now, in the public schools, they continue to use terminology that is called ELL -- English-language learners. These are the children that are taking the first steps towards learning English. Sometimes they referred to them as LEP children -- limited English proficient, which says -- since they are also taking the first few steps to learning English. There are others which they use, called children who speak a language other than English, LOTE. And they use the term "bilinguals," who are developing Spanish. And we're focusing how to improve assessments for these children because they speak both languages well or they're taking the first steps to learning both languages. One thing I've learned in my career is the importance of the family.

The family is very important. It's important to talk to the family and to hear them, to listen to what they're saying, not just ask them a list of questions and check them off and say things are fine. But you have to listen to the family because the family and other adults have a very important role in early development assessment and in formal assessment. It's also very urgent to ask all families, what is their linguistic background, including the degree of exposure to each language and how often they use each one of those languages because very often I've seen some professionals think that because the child speaks English well or because they don't have accent in English, that the learning assessment will not be affected. But that's not true in young children.

There are many different reasons why they don't have an accent. It doesn't mean, though, that their development is fully in English and that they can't speak Spanish. So, you need to ask all families. So, you need to ask parents who speak English very well because you don't know what's going on at home. Maybe the mother speaks English perfectly well, but in the home, she's only speaking Spanish to her baby. So, you can find something important about the development of that child by speaking to the family. And I think it's also extremely important to have a good list. In the ECLKC website, there's an excellent list that I urge you to look at because we don't have to start thinking about everything all over. We don't need to reinvent the wheel. If you go to the family, there's a lists already prepared for you to look at it to know what kind of questions to ask. All you have to do is print it out. Another important thing is to ask the family, "What's the age of the child?"

Is it a baby? Is it toddler? Is he preschool? Because that helps us determine how development is taking place. Also, it's very important to ask at what age was he exposed to another language? How many days ago, how many years ago did he begin being exposed to the other language? Also, how often do they use the language in the home? Is it just a little bit, a lot, half a day, half and half? And how much do they use it in the classroom or outside the classroom or with their caretaker?

Also ask whether there has been any change taking place in the caretaker. perhaps the grandma used to be taking care of the baby but now she's not because she's ill. Those are significant changes that can help us determine where the child's development should be in both languages. And also, usage. Very often I ask a family, "How often do you use English at home?" And they say, "Oh, all day long." I say, "Oh, wow. That's interesting." "Yeah. He's on TV all day. He's watching TV all day." And I say to them, "Do you speak to them in English?" "No, no, I only speak Spanish." "Does your husband?" "No. No." So, yeah, we do learn from television, but the use of the language between the mother and the father and the child is also very important.

And we know that. When they say they speak all day long, ask how and why. How is it they do this? Now I'm gonna talk to you about a little boy called Andreas, who's 3 years old. And I'm gonna talk about some of the questions that you could ask the family. Here's the video about him. When you come up, please use the microphone. What are some of the questions that you could ask about the development of this child? What are the questions we could ask the family or the teacher about the environment this child is in, how much English they're speaking, how much Spanish? I think the first question I'd ask to the family is, "Does he use single words at home?" without necessarily asking whether they're in English or Spanish? Because he's 3 years old. And I see that he could be using many more words. And he's not. I'm not hearing him using other words. So, that would be something I'd be interested in. I also wonder, what would it be for the family when you asked him those words because you want to approach things in a very delicate, respectful way.

Any other questions? So -- We want to find out if this child responds in Spanish when they're speaking Spanish to him. It seems like he's just taking the first steps in learning English. And the teacher is speaking to him in English. And he's trying to answer in Spanish. And we're saying, "Okay, he's getting it." But it may be important to find out, whether we're speaking to him directly in Spanish, if he also responds in Spanish, as well. Can he say a few sentences? And when he started doing this, in looking at this video, my impression is that it was maybe a month, two month, three months ago, maybe four months ago that he started this classroom with his teacher and so he's still a bit shy. And he's trying. He's trying. But I can't assume that. I have to ask the questions.

Let's now talk about the systematic development screening and assessment. Sandra, could you summarize what we saw in the video because the audience that is receiving the webcast did not see the video? Of course. There was a 3-year-old child. The teacher was speaking to him in English, asking if he wanted cereal, asking several questions, and the boy would point to things, but he didn't answer in English. But he was trying to answer. At the end, as he looked at some drawings, he started to say a few words that were the names of people. So, it was hard for him to speak in English. It appeared that he was doing his first steps in English, but we want to learn from the Spanish, whether he speaks Spanish at home, how well he speaks Spanish at home, or whether this child has a delay both in Spanish and English because if we see this, it could be that it's happening in both languages. This is something we have to look at. When the child goes to a new center or new school, it could be a bilingual child that's learning both languages. It could be a child whose delay in his other language is also important.

So, he has to be given support. Let's now talk about the systematic development screening and assessment tests. These are processes in which you gather information. focused on the individual child. It can occur from birth through age 5 and beyond. Also, we use observation and measurement of development. It can cross multiple domains. And we get data for decision making that are also differences in the systematic exams. They are brief, very brief. We use them to identify children who may need further assessment to verify developmental and/or health risks. Also, we use them to identify concerns regarding a child's developmental behavior, motor, language, social, cognitive and emotional skills. When we do continuous assessment, then the procedure is systemic. It gives us information from observation, interviews, portfolios, projects, tests, and other sources of information. And also it gives us information about the child's characteristics and development. With these systematic developments tests, we have a single purpose. And this child should be sent to a functional evaluation.

They are created for a single purpose. The data is not aggregated with time. When you do functional assessment, then the purpose is multiple. Determine the best program placement option, assess the child's progress, evaluate the program effectiveness, plan for optimal teaching. And this is so important. they are designed to be repeated, and the data are intended to be aggregated over time. And one more point -- the screening and assessments are different. But they do not need to be completely separate. Any information about the child's strength, knowledge, skills, and abilities identified during screening can be used as ongoing assessment data.

There are best practices that are recommended for screening. They aim at identifying concerns regarding a child's development, his behavior, motor, language, social, cognitive, and emotional skills.

And we can use one or more research-based developmental standardized screening tools for this purpose. We also use additional information that is given by the family and staff. With the best practice in assessment, best practices in assessment are standardized and structured. They give us progress in multiple developmental outcomes. We use them frequently to allow for individualization. We regularly use observation-based or direct-assessment information.

There are some points that are key. It's important that the programs have a formalized approach for implementing a screening and assessment system for all children. Just like DLL children -- all children. And when we use them, when we use these tools, when we use these screening and assessments, we note red flags that are raised during the screening and assessment process. When I do my assessment, I'm part of the assessment. I notice that something is strange, something that the child said that raises a red flag. I see that something is not developing well. So, not only do I look at the data. I have to think about the development of the child as compared to the other children. But I focus my attention to this child that I'm working with. And if there's an alarm, a red flag, I go to the teacher. I talk to the family in trying to learn more. There are also best practices for screenings and assessments with DLLs. It'd be best to have qualified bilingual staff to examine the linguistic skills in the native language and in English. Both skills have to be assessed. Also, domains in other than language skills, in the languages that best capture the child's development and the skills and the specific domain. That would be the best.

But if you do not have qualified bilingual staff available, you can use an interpreter along with a qualified staff person. And we will talk about how to use an interpreter. I can speak Spanish and English, but there are many other languages that I do not speak. If neither qualified bilingual staff nor interpreters are available, you can conduct the screenings and assessments in English. But, of course, this is not the best we can do. But if that's what we have, we'll do it. At that time, it is important to gather and use other information, such as structured observations over time and information gathered in a child's home and the family, in his own language. Now, how to work with an interpreter. It's important to meet with the interpreter beforehand. It's important to talk about the screenings and the assessments say why we do them, why is it important, what is the structure, why do we do it as we do it, because it may seem strange. It's a different way, a different thing from just talking to the child. Discuss expectations of screening or assessment, the administration, the documentation, and that's important. We all know that that is important.

And when you sit down with the child, with the family, you should focus on the child or parent. You can't have separate conversations because the families may feel isolated. If I am talking to somebody who's speaking French and I don't speak French, I'm not speaking at their eyes. The interpreter is helping me with their words, so I have to be looking at them to focus on them. The key points to remember. Read. Sometimes it's not easy, but read the screening and assessment manuals. And follow the instructions. There's a reason why they were created. Some measures were created to be administered across both languages. And other measures were created to be administered within each language. Most of the tools that we have are created to be used within each language and not across. But there are quite a few that can be used in English and in Spanish, and we can change from one language to the other while you administer the test.

And that's how they were created. Now we will talk about the things we should not be doing in screening and assessment, although sometimes it is done. Translate measures on your own or ask the interpreter to translate the tool. We want to do it because we want to help the child, but we not doing it. Let's think about a tool in English, and you are thinking about assessing a very small child, maybe 2 or 3 years old. One of the first questions that most tools have in English is -- And I'll be speaking English for a second. Look at the dog. Look at the car. Look at the sock. Look at the ball. Then we translate that into Spanish. Let's see if somebody helps me translating those sentences into Spanish.

Nobody? Somebody help me. So now we're saying in Spanish the same sentences. There are options. And when you say, "Look at the dog," or point or -- There are different ways in which you can say the same things. The other sentence was, "Look at the car." "Look at the ball." And you can say, "Ball." There are two or three words in Spanish for the word "ball." In Puerto Rico, they use one word. In other countries, they use another word. And that's not a mistake that the child makes, but it's a

difference in the language. "Look at the sock." "Look at the sock." Spanish, again, has two words -- "media," "calcetín." So, which is five questions you start asking yourself. "What word in Spanish should I be using?" And it could be Cuban Spanish, Mexican Spanish, Puerto Rican. They use different words. The difficulty in Spanish is greater. "Car" -- in English -- it can be "carro" -- "automobile." "Dog" is more difficult -- It's a more difficult word to pronounce in Spanish. "Sock," a one-syllable word, can be "calcetín," can be "media." So, although we want to use this measure, a measure that we bought, it's here we have an interpreter that could translate it into another language, an African language, French. When we ask another person to do it, they may not be doing it well. They may be using a word that is not used in other parts of the country, and at the end of the day, we gave the child a more difficult assessment. And the result will be that he will be given an assessment saying that he's more delayed in the language than he really is. So there are evidences.

There are -- These tests, these assessments, exist in other languages, in Spanish and in other languages. So, we should use those instead of us translating them because that will help the child. That's another no-no. Combine results from English and home language on your own. We have a tool in Spanish, and we have a tool in English. It's a DLL child. We administer the exam, and we're very happy because we have both results. And what we do is we add them. So, he got five in English, he got five in Spanish, five correct, so that's 10. He knows 10 words. So, I get my English manual. And it says, "Well, he can say 10 words." Well, that tool was not built in that fashion. When we have language tools, not only do we know in the study how many words they know. We want to know about their knowledge and usage. So, to add them ourselves, instead of doing what the manual does, is something -- is a no-no. In some tools, it's possible, but in most, no.

We must read manual even if they're a bit boring. And assess DLL children's language language skills only in one language. We have to do it sometimes. If we have no interpreters, if we don't have qualified staff. we do the test in English. But if we don't get more information from the family, we will not know about the development of the child as a whole, and I see this everywhere. We give suggestions to the family, to the doctors, based on English assessments. And a child that speaks both, we will only be knowing half of what the child knows. So, it's best to have qualified staff that speak both languages. We use the tools that have been written in those languages and then we assess the child in those two languages. What are the characteristics of the best screening and assessment measures for DLL children?

When I began my career, I never thought I would be working on assessment. It's something that I started developing because, through time, I saw results that weren't good in children and the results of the assessments that led me to focus my attention to this. What I noticed is that sometimes tools say, "This is very good, can be used from children from zero to 5 years of age." And then I see the way it was done. And most of the children that were assessed and evaluated were only 4 and 5 years of age. There's no proof or evidence about smaller children. So, my suggestion is that you verify that the tool, in fact, was created, researched for all the ages that it's focused on. I used an assessment for children that were 4 or 5 years of age. It was a Spanish-language exam. And a child that had never spoken English, had never heard Spanish, got a result, "advanced in Spanish."

So, this tool obviously did not work to give you the development of a child in Spanish in school. When you look at the way the assessment was built, there weren't many children that age included in the study. So, that's the suggestion I give you. Look at the tool, look at the question, and see how it was created and what proof and what evidence there is. Another point is, it has to have been created with large a group of children, at least 100 -- 200, better -- for each age bracket. 300, 400, even better. Thousands would be even better. But at least, for each age bracket, from six months to a year, 100. It should be analyzed to minimize biases. Each question was studied to make sure there were no biases for children that have different characteristics. Another important thing is reliability. The question is, does the measure provide a clear picture? Does it tell us something that is clear about the child? It doesn't matter if I give him the assessment or another colleague does it. The results will be the same.

The result would not be my result, but the child's. And there are some things that can be done to ensure this. We know that children change from one day to the next. If we give them the assessment on Monday and then do the same thing on Wednesday, the results should be similar, should be saying

the same things about the child. Another point is validity. Does the measure examine what matters? The most important because we are going to make an assessment with a tool that doesn't say what we want to understand. If I use a tool and the child is given low the level, that result tells me that maybe he is delayed and he needs more support, more help, maybe therapy.

Or if he gets a very high result, we're all very happy. He is developing well, and we can tell that to the family and we'll all be very happy. But the important thing is the validity. It's important that the measure will really tell us something about the child. Another important issue is that we have to go beyond translation. If we use a direct translation, it not be -- it may not have validity. Some of the tools that are being sold are the literal translations. And that's not how you should be doing it. The questions that we ask for different ages have to be different in English and in other languages. So, that's important to look at. What are the best words we should be using to understand the development of this child in each of the languages? The questions also have to be placed within the cultural backgrounds and experiences because sometimes they ask a question, and it's something they never heard of. They don't know what it is. So that's an important point, as well. Through my research, I've seen that some measures are well-developed.

Some are not. And if a measure is well-developed in one language, that does not mean it is in the other language. We will see here, on the first line, this is a tool in English. If the circle is black, it's very good. If it's not -- If it's not filled in, if it's white, it means it's bad. That's one measure, one tool. Very well done, including everything that I mentioned. There are many studies showing that it can be well-used with small children. The second line now, the same tool in Spanish now. And what can you see? There is no proof that it can be used with children that Spanish. Now we are going to look at this here, a test in English, the same in Spanish. And what do you see?

That it is valid in Spanish and it's valid in English. I see that in English, it's not as good here because we have this circle that is half-filled. But with bilingual children, we do have, then, a tool that can be used both in Spanish and in English, which is something that we are very happy about. I've also learned through my research, that some measures are better developed in Spanish than in English. There are a few. Most are slightly better in English. And some have no proof in Spanish.

But some, a few, are better in Spanish than in English. And that is very good. Some measures are well-developed across their English and Spanish versions to support interpretation of results from both languages. Some are not. When we do our assessment, we are looking at the child's language skills. If we do one measure in English and one in Spanish, we look at the results and we say, "Look at his development in English and in Spanish. They seem to be at the same level." Or maybe Spanish is more developed than English, or the other way, vice versa. So, we want to be able to do direct comparison with the results of the measures. Some do it well, and they are better for direct comparison than others, so that, at the end, we can say, "Well, this is the result in English, and this is the result in Spanish." One is a little bit better, or maybe the result is the same in both languages.

This is a measure that can be used more or less like that, another one, not as good, another one, the third, that's really good. And the third -- there are no proof it can be used for both. So, not only do we have to think about what language we can use, but how to use it better, using an interpreter, and which tool are we going to choose to answer our questions? Because that's what we want to know -- what the development of the child is. That's our concern. How can we help the child in school? How can we support the teachers that are teaching this child? Now let's talk about screening and assessment. What system do you use for screening and assessment? Can you please use the microphone? I think that teachers have used the Peabody, but they haven't obtained very good results for dual language learners, and Denver and Milestones, the Milestones, as well. I could elaborate a bit more. On these assessments that they ask you, there's a lot of evidence-based, both in Spanish and in English, and focuses a lot on the research they've done.

With the Peabody, which is the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, it's one of the best tests for language skills that exists in English. It's considered the gold standard in English, but not so much in Spanish. It does not have much validity in Spanish, nor does it have many studies backing it, even though a lot of people are using it in Spanish. But it is not one that I use for Spanish. In English, I do, yes. Which one do you use in Spanish? Well, a lot depends on the child. I use different ones in Spanish. But if Peabody

is for language skills in English, which is the best? Well, I can't suggest one that works for everyone. There are some that I like. I focus on the child's development, not just in Spanish and English, but I am concerned with the total development of the child.

So, I use something which is very long. It's called the Receptive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test, Spanish-Bilingual Edition, which can be used in both Spanish and English, as well as the picture vocabulary of the same one. This gives us the full picture of the child's development. However, it doesn't tell us exactly where the English stand or the Spanish stand because you use both languages. Another good one with toddlers is PLS, Preschool Language Survey. It's quite strong in both Spanish and English, and I use it with the youngest children, babies. Although that's what I use, sometimes it's important to use something different, based on what program you have with the family or the question you're trying to address. Please, please make sure you use the microphone when you speak. It would help with the interpretation. The interpreters cannot hear unless it is mic'd. I have a question that comes from our online question.

One person wants to know more about children who use -- who learn other languages, other than Spanish. For instance, in the rural areas, they can't find any support. They have children that speak Cantonese, but there is no help for assessing those children. Yes. It's unfortunate. I think today we're in a fairly good position with the Spanish tests and a few other languages, but if you have a very, very small child, since this is a 0-3 conference, for early infancy, there are some tests that have been translated very well into other languages, such as the McArthur Child Development Inventory, which is a questionnaire for the parents. I don't give the parent the paper to fill out. I use it for interviews. You can use an interpreter and then use a test that has been translated into quite a few languages. I think it's available in 10 to 15 languages. It's called the McArthur Child Development Inventory. And there are some studies about the validity of this tool. But, yes, it is more difficult. And perhaps you have a problem with a child who speaks Creole, whereas most of the teachers or assessors speak only English and Spanish. But that child is still in the classroom, and you have to help them. So, the best option in that case is to use an interpreter and find if there is an assessment available in that language.

If not, then do the assessment in English, which we know will not tell us everything the child knows, but if we do home observation, home visits, and use the interpreter in the interview, we'll learn a lot about the child that way. Also, as I said, we ourselves are the tool. We have experience. If we see something, if there's a sign, a warning that something is not working right, it's not developing right, then you should listen to your own self and your thinking. Any other question? Well, we could talk about systems. There's a lot of systems. I have a comment. I agree with everything you've said about not translating the assessments because that will affect the validity of the assessment. However -- and I don't know if everybody agrees with this -- depending on the region in which you live and where you work, there are other resources available. For instance, I am a speech therapist, and I use PLS a lot, the Preschool Language skill test. But the population that I work with mainly speak English. And the assessment is not available in Spanish for me and the few children that I do see that speak Spanish. So I end up with the problem of having to use the English PLS to assess children who are speaking both languages. Why can't you buy the Spanish version? Well, I'm working in a nonprofit organization, and these are very, very expensive tests. So, you try to do the best possible given your situation to make the best clinical decisions and the best ethical decisions. So, this is one of the things I have to deal with on a daily basis. And I agree with all you've said. And I don't know if other participants have the same situation, depending where you work, because there's very limited resources or the number of interpreters available is limited -- In my case, for instance, I don't need an interpreter, but for others, that might be a limiting factor.

Also time is another limiting factor because ideally you prefer to take a lot of time to see the child, visit him several times. In my clinic, because of insurance, et cetera, all I'm allowed is one hour to assess a child. So, that's another additional stress factor. I just wanted to point that out because I think it's something important to discuss. I see that there's a lot of heads in the room that are nodding and saying yes. So, what experience, others, do you have, or what suggestions do you have? Have you tried to ask for more money, for more time? What has been helpful to others in the room or online? No suggestions? I have to deal with this even now. I have a little bit of money, not much. But when I was working full time at the hospital, I was also told, "Will you please assess this child, some therapy

with this child?" And I'd say, "Well, I don't have the Spanish tests." And they'd say, "Oh, you don't need to do that. "You speak Spanish. You're an interpreter. You can do it all." Well, yeah, but I'm not a super woman. And --

So, what I do is explain why we can't do it, talk to them, tell why that assessment is not going to come out right, it's not gonna be a valid assessment. And I do that talking -- And I say that to my supervisor, my head, the psychology directors at a hospital. I tell them, "You are asking me "to do an assessment that is not valid "and will not do the best thing possible for this child for a few hundred dollars." And often that argument has worked. Sometimes there are monies available for states -- in the states for interpreters, Depending where you work, you may be able to get an interpreter. But you have to sometimes push to help your families. So, we do have to look for other resources. I have another question from online. What do you think about the pre-IPT for children 3-5 or the ASER ESIR for children 3-5? ESIR. Well, I don't have all the tools in my head like a computer.

So, if this person could send me a direct e-mail to barrueco@cua.edu. I could respond with a suggestion. I did write a book, and I'm always looking at different tools. And I have most of them memorized.

I'm thinking right now about pre-IPT. And I think that this one has problems with Spanish, but I don't want to say that I'm certain of this. If I recall correctly, that's my memory, but I can always be wrong in my mind. Over the years and with the stress of the work, maybe I'm wrong. So, please send me an e-mail. I'd also like to look at the other one you talked about, the ESIR. Again, you can write to barrueco -- b-a-r-r-u-e-c-o -- dot -- cua.edu. And we could maybe even chat online.

Does anyone else have a question with the pre-IPT? Does anybody else use this? No one else does? Any other questions? Please speak to the mic. I don't have a question, just a comment. I am -- I am not an assessment expert, and I'm not familiar with tools. I'm sure many of us here also don't have all questions. I'm a social worker, and I work directly with the families. And I have referred children for assessment because it's clear to me that, in the interaction with the parents, there are some language difficulties. And so I just wanted to say that maybe all of us here don't have the entire picture, all the information, but your presentation has helped me understand the process that needs to be followed so that I can prepare for an interview and so that I can try to help the families fight for something. Because if they get an assessment in English and then a separate one in Spanish, I can ask them to bring me the results and see if maybe they need to have another assessment, a different one that would be more appropriate to their particular child and experience.

That's an important role all of us have, not just do the daily work, but how can we be a very clear, strong voice for the families? I'm a psychologist, and I work in Miami, where we have a lot of Spanish-speaking children, but coming from many different Spanish-speaking countries. One of the problems we often have are the standards used by the exams. Even though they may be in Spanish, it may be applied to the population of one country and not another. So, have you looked at that? What would be the best exams or assessment that could be used for children coming from different Hispanic cultures, particularly for toddlers? I'd also like to ask questions about the I.Q. tests for young children, preschool. Are there some that you think are better than others for those who are Spanish-speaking?

And I would like to mention a problem we've had. We've had several examples of children who have development problems. They're behind in only language skills, but maybe in other skills, as well. And what I've observed is that very often it's easier for them to learn English rather than Spanish because, of course, they're getting English at school, they watch it on TV. So, they learn English first, but the parents don't speak English. So, then you have a big problem because the children can't communicate with their parents. So, how do you help those children? Let's start with the tools and see if they're standardized here in the U.S. And the tools used for the bilingual community -- Some tools, for instance, have been standardized in Mexico and Argentina, and yet we use them here in the U.S. Again, as I said earlier, it's very important to focus on the characteristics of the assessment. I always make sure that the development of DLL students is included in that tool. because I am performing the assessment in the United States. So I want to know how this child is developing compared to the other bilingual children here in the United States. Now, very often there are some tools that do use both They are prepared in other countries, but also includes populations from the U.S. And they used both

populations to develop their standard. Those are the kinds that I try to use because you can't have lots of different tools to us, one with one child, a different one with another one because that doesn't allow for comparison. Some children that I see have just arrived from their country of origin. And for them, I like to use the tests that have been developed in other countries.

As to the I.Q. tests -- I think that these are not very current in Spanish. As you know, there is an I.Q. test for children for children who are, 6 years of age or older, the WISC test. And I think it's gonna be coming out this month in Spanish again. But the WISC, which is used for younger children, still has not been well crafted in Spanish. I don't know why they're still waiting to come up with it. They're very behind in that. And the other test, the Bayley, which I love -- I really like Bayley for English-speaking young children. But it still has not been properly done in Spanish. And I don't mean just translated. I mean well done in Spanish. Even though we use it so much for English-speaking children. There are others that I use for assessment if I'm focusing on cognitive things.

If not, I use developmental screening ones that allow me to see the child's developing in the cognitive area. And then the last question that was asked, which is very important, which is, you have a child that is developing more in English than in Spanish. And that's something we see very often everywhere. You go to the supermarket. You see that the little girl is speaking English to mother and father, and Mom or Dad are answering in Spanish. Let me ask you a question. All of a sudden, the room is silent. Like my daughter -- I say, "I have a question for you," and she immediately clams up. Is it better to learn English or another language when you're a child or an adult? The room answered, "The child." Why? The child? Okay. Why? Please take the mic.

The mic is there for you, and the interpreter cannot hear unless you speak to the mic. I think that it's easier for a child to learn than it is for an adult and that many of the reasons why it's more difficult for an adult to learn another language is because he has many other things that are worrying them, paying their bills. "I don't know who you're talking about," says the speaker. But the child doesn't have those types of concerns. The child is a sponge that's just taking in all the information. And then, at some point, he accumulates it and accumulates all that information. It's true that sometimes some children may speak English more than they do Spanish. They may speak Spanish at home. But the main influence comes from the school. And in school they speak English, TV is in English, and so it becomes easier for the child to speak English because that's what the environment provides. Now, Let's think about the brain of a child.

The brain of a child -- can it learn better than an adult does learn English? That's an interesting question. I began my study by -- my career by doing a study with children and adults in a totally sound-proof room to see if children could learn language better than adults did. And in looking at all the studies, we found the result was, from a cognizant perspective, that it's exactly the same. In other words, you can tell these parents that, yes, they can learn English. They have experience. They already speak another language. They're fairly intelligent, as well. 'Cause sometimes parents say, "Oh, I'm ashamed to speak "I can't. It's too hard. "The child is much smarter than me in doing that. Well, he studies have shown that children do develop more quickly in English, but it's not cognitive. It's more because they have more time because we adults are embarrassed sometimes we because we think very quickly in our own language.

And so to force ourselves to say something in another language becomes difficult and we're embarrassed. So, it's more a question of psychology. And also the time factor. Children play for hours on one thing. They can spend hours playing with blocks. "I don't care whether I don't say this word." And they -- They learn as people speak to them. But the adults have a lot of wisdom that would help them. They know another language. They have phrases. They have sentences they know.

So, it's from -- We're learning from the top down, whereas children are learning from the bottom up. And yet, on all these tests that we did. the outcome was exactly the same when you compared how quickly either a child or another adult could learn another language. And the reason children do more, do better sometimes, is because they have more time and they're less embarrassed. They don't have other worries. The parents work a huge amount, and they're exhausted. But you can tell your parents, "Yes, you can, if you take the time," and perhaps refer them to program studies that can help the parents learn. We have done studies where we have given parents English-speaking classes. And what

we found is that sometimes they don't come to the class if it's at the university.

However, if we set up groups and we teach the child and the parent together English, then the parents do show up because they want to learn English and share that with their child. I have a question. I learned English later. I have three children. I wanted the youngest one to be bilingual. I work with toddlers, so I knew you could learn both languages at the same time. So I started doing that. I'd say, "There's la pelota," and, "Bring me the ball." And he wouldn't speak it. He was 3 years old, and he almost didn't speak. And he was very aggressive. So, I thought he needed to learn how to speak, so I chose English 'cause he's in the U.S. Now he's 5, and he still doesn't speak English. But I want him to speak English. It's my language. But I don't want to hold him back. because I want him to learn to speak Spanish. And I even think he's behind in English, and he's 5 years old.

So, I don't know if I want to slow him down even more by only speaking Spanish at home or whether I should continue and let's see if he learns Spanish and speak with other family members in Spanish. Well, why don't we talk about that later on? Actually, we could spend hours talking about this. We know that -- And I'm not speaking about your child in particular here. What I'm talking about is in general. Children who have a language delay will have the language delay in both languages, but they will not have confusion between the two languages. We do mix the two languages when we speak 'cause that's only natural. But it doesn't mean that there's a problem. And sometimes doctors and other professionals say, "Oh, this child has language delay. We're worried, so just speak to him in one language." That is not right. That child -- And we have lots of studies that support this. That child will continue to develop at his own pace in both languages. But maybe we can talk about what you can do now. Because it's part of life, switching the use of the language at home, speaking a bit more in Spanish or in English or seeing how you can mix the two and what would be best for the children. Another question.

In California, the DRDP is mandatory. Are you familiar with that? We have it in Spanish also. Do you want to speak about that tool a bit and your experience with this tool? I've had a positive experience when I was a teacher, although now I'm just a monitor. That's a job. Yeah. And I think it was a good tool. The improved it. We had the DRDP 2010. Now we have the 2015 DRDP that's just come out. And -- And I think it's a good tool. Is it? Yes, it is good. And now we have that available in Spanish. And I monitored the family childcare providers. Some of them don't speak any English. And so the tool needs to be made available in Spanish. And I think that it does provide good results. We've had some good results at the agency where I work. Thank you for sharing that tool, as well. I do have that one in my mind because I looked at it recently. It's well done, well structured. Many studies both in English and in Spanish have been used to develop it. And there was a lot of effort put in to making it as good as possible. And it's so important because it's mandatory. When you have a mandatory tool that has to be used, then it has to be a very strong one. It's called DRDP. Desired result -- I have to look it up. I have quite a few -- I have [inaudible] There's another question from our audience. Could you talk about the challenge in using the Oral Language Proficiency Test, OLPT, for children with special needs? I'm not familiar with that exam. Again, please ask the person to send me an e-mail. I will look it up, and I can give you a suggestion, but my apologies.

I haven't looked at that one for some time now. We have three minutes left. Is there another question? Maybe we could talk about which kind of assessment system or development assessment system you use? In reference to what somebody was asking about, choosing a language to speak at home, I find this often. Often children are behind in both languages and there's a lot of disorder in language acquisition. And often it's difficult to decide which is the language you want to support because all parents want their kids to succeed in school. And the school is in English.

So, for instance, I have one child who's very behind. But they've asked for English because all occupational therapists or physical therapists all speak in English, but the mother only speaks Spanish. So, there's a disconnect there. And yet that connection with the mother is supposed to be very important. I want to be able to empower the mother to feel good, that she can still communicate to her child, even though she only speaks Spanish. But all we're doing is strengthening English. English comprehensions has improved. He now can be part of the classroom. But it's a difficult choice to make in determining what's best for the child. And often it's very difficult for the parent when you make

that choice. Yes, the fact is that today there are many professionals that speak English and are going to be performing the therapy, the comprehensive therapy, in English.

And my suggestion is that we tell the parents that they to continue to speak the language they speak because that is -- The relationship that the parent has with their child is the most important relationship they can have. Now, there are some studies that say children will learn English automatically because it's a fairly dominant language, particularly starting with children who are almost 2. They already know which is the dominant language. They already are favoring English, even though we may speak to them in Spanish. 50/50, they're gonna end up learning English better because they know that that's what they hear everybody else speaking in their environment. But what's so important -- more -- is the link between the mother and the child.

That mother's gonna be with that child all their lives. She's going to love him, support him. But she needs to have a language to communicate with him. And the language can be delayed. if, when the professionals leave, the mother is left in a position where she can't communicate with her child anymore. And if the mother can't or father can't speak to their child, we can see a delay. Well, we've come to the very end. I thank you very much for your time. I know that there are many other questions you may have about specific assessment tests. I could stay here in the room for another half-hour and talk to you about these different tools. I thank those of you who are online with us.

Thank you for having been with us this morning. Please send me an e-mail to barrueco@cua.edu.